

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
TO USIA WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
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SECSTATE WASHDC 7463

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USIAC

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: BLACK VIEWS IN JOHANNESBURG

POST PROGRAMMED AGENCY LOAN FILM "MORE THAN A DREAM" BEFORE
INVITED REPRESENTATIVES FROM WASA (WRITERS ASS'N OF SOUTH
AFRICA) MARCH 22. (NOTE: WASA IS UMBRELLA REFUGE FOR BLACK
WRITERS AND JORNALISTS SINCE OCTOBER 19 WHEN UBJ WAS BANNED).
TWENTY TURNED UP FOR THE MEETING, INCLUDING POET SIPHO SEPAMLA,
MOTHOBHI MUTLOATSE (THE VOICE) THAMI MAZWAI AND SEVERAL OTHER
FIREBRANDS. BPOAO AND CONSUL SEGARS CO-CHAired DISCUSSION
SESSION WHICH FOLLOWED FILM. BLACK GUESTS PROCEEDED TO CLOUD
UP AND RAIN ON BOTH CO-CHAIRMEN. FOLLOWING WAS THEIR MESSAGE:

1. FILM WHICH PURPORTS TO SHOW PROGRESS IN US SOUTH NOT
RELEVANT TO RSA SITUATION WHERE BLACKS COULD LIVE PEACEFULLY
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WITH WHITES IF LATTER LET THEM. THEY SAID FILM SHOULD BE
SHOWN TO WHITE AUDIENCES -- "AND NOT TO LIBERAL ONES BUT TO
HARD-CORE AFRIKANERS." MODERATORS RESPONDED THAT FILM WOULD
BE SHOWN TO MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE LIVING IN RSA.

2. MEETINGS LIKE THIS WERE "NOT GETTING US ANYWHERE."
BLACKS WERE TIRED OF COMING TO USIS FOR DIALOGUE SESSIONS,

MAKING THEIR CASE, YET NOT SEEING ANY CHANGES IN THEIR PLIGHT.
"WE GET OUR POINTS ACROSS TO YOU AMERICANS AND THEN YOU GO
ON YOUR WAY AND WE HAVE TO START ALL OVER AGAIN WITH YOUR
SUCCESSORS."

3. IF USG REALLY WANTED TO END APARTHEID IN RSA IT WOULD
"PULL OUT OF HERE AND STOP SUPPORTING THE VORSTER
GOVERNMENT." THE US "SHOULD SHOW ITS TRUE COLORS." EVEN
IF IT MEANT THAT BY DISINVESTING, AND OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD
COME IN TO FILL THE GAP, THIS ACTION WOULD REPRESENT IMPORTANT
SYMBOLIC GESTURE TO BLACKS AND TO SAG. BOTH CO-CHAIRMEN
REJECTED CHARGE THAT USG "SUPPORTED VORSTER GOVERNMENT" AND
AS EVIDENCE SEGARS LISTED ACTIONS TAKEN BY USG SINCE MAY,
1977 VORSTER/MONDALE MEETING. SEGARS ASKED WHETHER ADVOCATES
OF DISINVESTMENT TRULY REFLECTED WILL OF BLACK SOUTH
AFRICANS, A QUESTION WHICH REALLY RANKLED THOSE PRESENT.
THEY CAME OUT UNANIMOUSLY THAT DISINVESTMENT WAS NECESSARY
AND SAID THE "TRUE BLACK LEADERS" HAVE ALWAYS HELD THIS
POSITION. IT IS ONLY "STOOGES" WHO FAVOR CONTINUED IN-
VESTMENT. "BLACK PEOPLE WHO HAVE ALWAYS SUFFERED, ARE PREPARED
TO SUFFER MORE IN ORDER TO EFFECT CHANGE." BOTH MODERATORS
EXPLAINED THAT IN DEMOCRATIC, COMPLICATED SOCIETY LIKE US
EVEN IF DECISION TAKEN TO DISINVEST, MUCH WOULD BE
INVOLVED BEFORE THAT POLICY COULD BE IMPLEMENTED. GUESTS
WERE REMINDED THAT IN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD US POLICY HAD TO
CONSIDER EFFECT DISINVESTMENT WOULD HAVE ON ALLY SUCH AS
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UK WHOSE INVESTMENT IN RSA WAS MORE THAN THREE TIMES OURS,
AND ON WHOSE DOMESTIC ECONOMY THE IMPACT OF SUCH A DECISION
WOULD BE STAGGERING. WHILE WE CONSTANTLY REVIEWED SITUATION,
PRESENT POLICY WAS TO VIEW US INVESTMENT AS POSSIBLE FORCE
FOR CHANGE AND THAT WE FEEL POSITIVE LEVERAGE MAY BE MORE
EFFECTIVE AT GETTING RESULTS THAN NEGATIVE LEVERAGE. WE
DOUBTED SAG WOULD CHANGE UNTIL IT SAW CHANGE TO BE IN ITS SELF-
INTEREST. WE WERE ATTEMPTING TO CONVINCE THEM THEIR SELF-
INTEREST DEMANDED CHANGE. FEW PARTICIPANTS WERE CONVINCED.

4. MOTLOATSE (ONE OF FOUNDERS OF MEDUPE, BANNED ORGANIZATION
OF POETS, AND FORMER PARTICIPANT IN IOWA WRITER'S PROGRAM)
CONFIDED TO BPAO THAT ANTI-US FEELING WAS RUNNING HIGH AMONG
BLACKS. HE SAID USIS READING ROOM WAS WELCOME BECAUSE OF ITS
BOOKS AND MATERIALS BUT SOWETO BLACKS ARE NOT HAPPY WITH
US POLICY WHICH IS PERCEIVED TO BE "A LOT OF NOISE BUT NO
ACTION." TWO PARTICIPANTS TOLD BPAO THAT "TIME IS PAST FOR
TALKING" AS THEY LEFT USIS.

COMMENT: ABOVE VIEWS ARE PROBABLY ACCURATE REFLECTION OF
PREVAILING ATTITUDES AMONG YOUNGER, EDUCATED INTELLIGENTSIA
IN TOWNSHIPS. THEY ARE BORN OF FRUSTRATION AND BITTERNESS.

SUCCESS OF SAG ACTIONS ON OCTOBER 19 HAS MADE APPARENT THEIR
OWN IMPOTENCE. IT IS NATURAL THEY BLAME SOMEBODY FOR THEIR
PLIGHT AND USG IS HANDY TARGET.
HUGHES

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Message Attributes

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